It is normal to increase utilisation of capacity in a phased manner to gradually reach to 90 per cent in a few month's time. When the capacity utilisation is likely to cross 90 per cent expansion of existing exchanges is usually started.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Guidelines are available in the Department of Telecommunications to ensure optimum utilisation of the equipped capacity.

Installation of bag de-dusting plants

70. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had planned to install bag de-dusting plants, to avoid dust in mail sorting and post offices;

(b) if so, what was the targets set for the Seventh and Eight Five Year Plans separately and what are the achievements, so far;

(c) if there is shortfall in the achievement of targets, the reasons therefor, the remedial measures taken and the results thereof;

(d) the impact on the health of mail sorters and other employees of Post Offices due to non-installation of adequate number of bag-de-dusting Plants and the manner in which the affected employees have been compensated; and

(e) the responsibilities fixed for inadequate installation of such plants and action taken or proposed to be taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Fifty de-dusting plants were planned for installation during the seventh Five Year Plan. In the absence of indigenous technology on Indian Company was contracted after inviting tenders for procurement and supply of three prototype samples of bag de-dusting plants and these were installed at Bombay, Bangalore and Delhi respectively. Further development of the de-dusting equipment however could not materialise because of the unsatisfactory maintenance of the three prototypes by the Company concerned which eventually gave rise to a dispute and the matter is presently subjudice.

No specific target in this regard has been set for the 8th Five Year Plan since this was to be formulated annually. For the year 1994-95 about 16 locations have been identified for setting up such equipments.

(c) As per the agreement governing procurement of these equipments, the supplier was required to, first develop prototype, carry out satisfactory maintenance of the equipment and progressively indigenous it by setting up manufacturing facility in the country, so that the Department could consider placing of bulk orders for the remaining equipments.

The shortfall during the Seventh Five Year Plan was due to the unsatisfactory performance of the prototype arising from poor maintenance support provided by the supplier. In the circumstances the Department did not place further orders for the remaining equipments planned.

Bag washing plant which regularly washes all bags used for transportation of mails have since been installed in seven locations in the country and these have been operating satisfactorily.

(d) In order to provide satisfactory work environment the Department has initiated various measures including installation of seven bag washing units in the country where bags are regularly washed. In addi-

tion nylon bags and dousti bags which do not accumulate dust so easily have been introduced progressively in place of the jute bags.

(e) The plan for installing bag dedusting plants in the country fell through because of the inability of the contracted Company to develop successful prototype which could provide the desired level of performance.

Losses from Postal Services

71. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Department of Posts is incurring unit loss in most of its operations including from Registered letter/parcels, newspapers and periodicals etc. excepting on speed-post letters;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the last two years and unit realisations from such operations vis-a-vis units costs; and

(c) the manner in which the total revenue deficit of the Department is ought to be contained, despite heavy operational losses from postal services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details are given in the enclosed statement. (See below).

(c) Efforts are continuously made to contain the working expenses by adopting strict economy measures and expenditure control as also by simplification of procedures wherever possible.

Statement

Cost and revenue of postal service (in deficit)

(In paise per Unit)

Services	1992-93			1993-94		
	Cost	Revenue	Deficit	Cost	Revenue	Deficit
Postcards . . .	154.25	15.00	139.25	156.87	15.00	141.87
Printed Cards . . .	144.19	60.00	84.19	145.76	60.00	85.76
Letter cards . . .	156.50	75.00	81.50	160.93	75.00	85.93
Reg. Newspapers						
Single	211.72	25.67	186.05	204.99	25.34	179.65
Bundle	277.53	45.11	232.42	263.21	46.36	216.85
Book Post						
B. pattern & S. packets	228.25	178.93	49.32	220.06	207.19	12.87
Printed Books . .	294.20	151.71	142.49	277.79	155.64	122.15
Other Pariodicals . .	327.09	128.55	198.54	307.46	152.00	155.46
Parcels	2210.98	1701.69	509.29	1939.75	1646.25	293.50
Registration . .	1036.37	600.00	436.37	990.34	600.00	390.34
Insurance . . .	1375.86	1101.00	274.86	1336.02	1477.53	141.51
Money Orders. . .	1409.33	1096.78	312.55	1328.04	1167.63	160.41